

# 6

Science  
Standard  
6.5.d.



## Dictionary

California Education and the Environment Initiative

**D R A F T**  
for discussion purposes only



# Playing the Same Role



# Dictionary

Name:

---

# A

## alpine

Alpine biome areas are found at high elevations (mountains) at all latitudes. They are even found on the equator.

The climate is like that of tundra/polar. It is very cold in the winter and mild during the short summer. Alpine regions (high elevation) near the equator have longer summers. Little rain or snow falls here. Also, like the tundra biome, low shrubs are common.



# B

## biome

A group of similar ecosystems. There are nine kinds of biomes on land. Each biome occurs in different places around the planet. The climate is similar wherever the biome is found. Similar kinds of plants and animals live in each biome.





### **carnivore**

An organism that obtains energy and matter by eating other animals.



### **chaparral**

Chaparral is one of nine land biomes on Earth. Most continents have chaparral along parts of their western coast.

Chaparral covers about 10 percent of California. It occurs in three places in the state. It is found along the coast. It is found on mountain slopes in Southern California. It is also found in the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada.

The weather in the chaparral biome is hot and dry in summer. It is rainy, but mild in winter. Most of the plants are short, evergreen shrubs that grow close to one another. The shrubs have stiff branches and small, tough leaves.

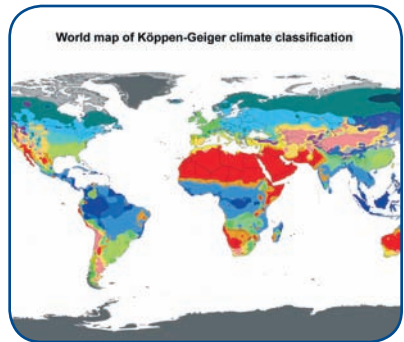
## characteristic

A quality that makes an individual or group different from others.



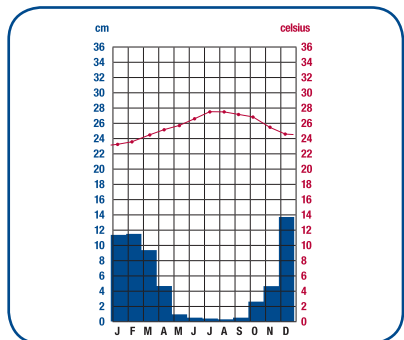
## climate

The weather in an area averaged over a long period of time.



## climatogram

A graph that shows average temperature and precipitation each month for a given area.





## competition

1. The struggle between two or more organisms for limited supplies of food, water, or other resources.
2. The act of competing as rivals.



## deciduous forest

Deciduous forests are found in the eastern United States, Canada, Europe, China, Japan, and parts of Russia.

The climate has four distinct seasons. Temperature changes a lot during the year. There is more rainfall than even in tropical biomes.

Large deciduous trees—trees that lose their leaves during winter—dominate these forests. The understory—what you see close to the ground as you walk through the forest—has smaller trees and shrubs. In old forests, ferns may cover the forest floor.

D

## decomposer

Bacteria or fungi that obtain energy and matter by breaking down the remains of dead organisms.



## desert

Deserts are found on most continents. Deserts are located further from the equator than are savannas.

Desert is the driest biome. Deserts can be very hot or very cold. Hot deserts are found in California and the southwest United States, South America, Africa, Australia, and Asia. Antarctica and Greenland have cold deserts.

Some deserts seem to have little more than sand. Others have low scrub plants and different kinds of cacti.





**ecological role**

An organism's job or function within an ecosystem.

**endemic**

Found only in a specified geographic region and nowhere else.

**energy**

The capacity to do work or the source of power to do work.

# F

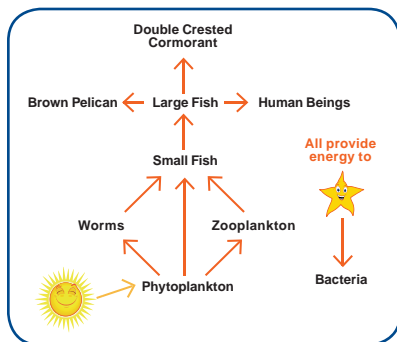
## feral

A word describing a wild animal or population of animals that once lived among humans as pets or were raised for food. Feral animals escaped and became wild.



## food web

A set of interacting food chains in an ecosystem.



# G

## grassland

Grasslands are found in the middle latitudes of most continents, far from coastal areas. In North America, we often call them prairies. The most common plants are grasses.

Grasslands have four seasons. Summers are hot, and winters are cold. Precipitation varies during the year.





### herbivore

An organism that obtains energy and matter by eating plants or other producers.



### introduced species

A plant or animal that now occurs in an area outside its natural range as a result of human activity.



### irrigation

The act of supplying water to plants through pipes, ditches, or other means.

# L

## logging

The act of cutting trees for lumber.



# O

## omnivore

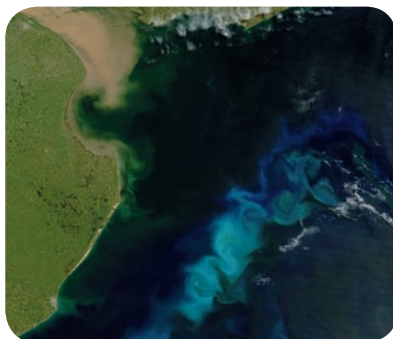
An organism that obtains energy and matter by eating both plants and animals.



# P

## phytoplankton

Tiny “plant” plankton that drift with currents in fresh or salt water. Phytoplankton make their own food through photosynthesis.





## precipitation

Water that falls from clouds to Earth as rain, mist, hail, sleet, ice, or snow.



## producer

An organism (plant or alga) that converts light energy to chemical energy stored in carbohydrates.



## rainforest

There are two kinds of rainforests. Tropical rainforests are found on or very near the equator. Temperate rainforests are found in coastal California, Oregon, and Washington. California's redwood forests are temperate rainforests.

R



### **rainforest (continued)**

Both kinds of rainforests are very wet and have no dry season. Tropical rainforests are warmer because they are closer to the equator. Temperate areas have mild climates.

Rainforests, especially tropical rainforests, have more plant species than other kinds of biomes, including many tall trees.



## **S**

### **salinity**

The measure of the amount of salts dissolved in water.





## savanna

Savanna is one of the nine land biomes. It is found in a wide band on both the north side and south side of the equator. It is usually found between tropical rainforests and desert biomes.

Savanna is one of the biomes found in Australia. It is also found in South America, Asia, and Africa.

A savanna is rolling grassland. There are also some shrubs and trees. Savannas have warm temperatures all year. They have one dry season and one wet season.



## siltation

The buildup of silt as a result of having grains of soil washed into rivers and streams through erosion or deposited back on land during flooding.

# T

## taiga

Taiga is a Russian name for coniferous forest. There is more taiga in the world than any other biome. It is found in a wide band across North America, Europe, and Asia, south of the Arctic tundra.

The winters are very cold with much snow. In the summer, the ground thaws and the forests support many animals.

Coniferous trees dominate these forests. Conifers are evergreen trees with needle-like leaves.



## transfer of matter

The movement of nutrients from one organism to another through a food chain.







### tundra/polar

Tundra/Polar is found close to the North Pole (the Arctic and Antarctic regions). This biome is so cold that the frozen ground never thaws completely. There are, in effect, two layers of soil. There is little sunlight in winter and a lot during the short summer. There is not much precipitation. There is little plant life because of the cold and lack of sunlight. Lichens, mosses, and small shrubs grow low to the ground.



### vegetation

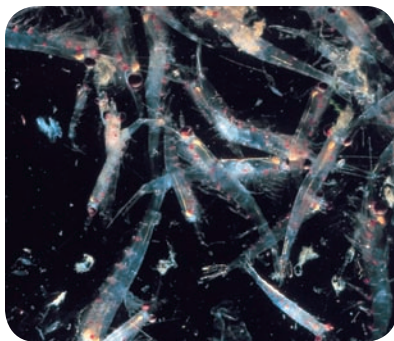
The plant life found in an area or region.

V

# Z

## zooplankton

Animal plankton that drift with currents in fresh or salt water.



# Credits

## Dictionary and Word Wall Cards

### Illustration Credits

Climatogram	Climatogram – Rebecca Voorhees, Creative Services, California State University, Sacramento
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Tundra	Tundra – John Pitcher/iStockphoto
Vegetation	Desert Wild Flowers – Tim Fitzharris/National Geographic Society
Zooplankton	Krill – Jamie Hall/NOAA/Wikipedia

## NOTES:

[illegible]

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## NOTES:

[illegible]



Unit Title: **Playing The Same Role**

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